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Michigan State University Extension

Preserving Food Safely - 01600538

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PECTIN

Pectin is a "gum" found naturally in fruits that causes jelly to gel. Tart apples, crab apples, sour plums, Concord grapes, quinces, gooseberries, red currants and cranberries are especially high in **pectin**. Apricots, blueberries, cherries, peaches, pineapple, rhubarb and strawberries are low in **pectin**. Underripe fruit has more **pectin** than fully ripe fruit. Jellies and jams made without added **pectin** should use 1/4 underripe fruit.

Many recipes call for the addition of **pectin**. **Pectin** is available commercially either in powdered or liquid form. These two forms are not interchangeable, so use the type specified in the recipe. Powdered **pectin** is mixed with the unheated fruit or juice. Liquid **pectin** is added to the cooked fruit and sugar mixture immediately after it is removed from the heat. When making jellies or jams with added **pectin**, use fully-ripe fruit.

Pectin is concentrated in the skins and cores of fruit; that is why some recipes call for those to be included.

Commercial pectins may be used with any fruit. Many homemakers prefer the added-**pectin** method for making jellied fruit products because fully ripe fruit can be used, cooking time is shorter and more precise and the yield from a given amount of fruit is greater.

Fruit pectins should be stored in a cool, dry place so they will keep their gel strength. they should not be held over from one year to the next.

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